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ABSTRACT

During fall 1985, a study was conducted of the demographic and enrollment characteristics of first-time Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) students. The study, which sought to identify any longitudinal trends developing over the past 4 years, revealed the following: (1) 696 first-time students enrolled at PVCC in 1985, representing the smallest group of first-time students since 1974, and accounting for only 18.1% of the total student body; (2) the typical fall 1985 first-time student was a white female, between 18 and 21 years of age, residing in either the city of Charlottesville or Albemarle County; (3) first-time students tended to enroll part-time, in day classes, and not in a curricular program; (4) between 1983 and 1984, there was a 31.4% decrease in the number of recent high school graduates enrolling at PVCC; (5) there was a steady drop in the number and proportion of first-time students majoring in General Studies; and (6) the percentage of first-time students accepted by PVCC who actually enrolled increased dramatically. The report emphasized the importance of maintaining successful outreach efforts at area high schools and recommended that recruiting first-time students at PVCC be closely monitored. (EJV)

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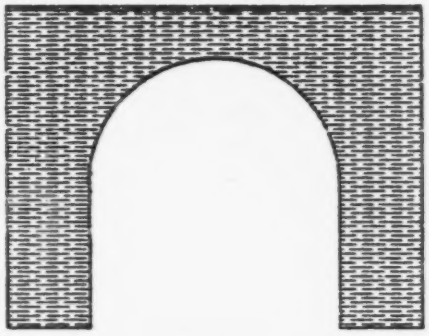

PVCC FIRST-TIME STUDENT PROFILE FALL QUARTER 1985

Office of Institutional
Research and Planning
Piedmont Virginia
Community College
Charlottesville, Virginia

Research Report 1-86
April 1986

JC 860 199

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PVCC First-Time Student Profile

Fall Quarter 1985

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Research Report 1-86

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PVCC First-Time Student Profile
Fall Quarter 1985

Introduction

Three types of students enroll at Piedmont Virginia Community College each fall: (1) students who are returning to PVCC after one or more quarters of study at the College, (2) students who have previously attended other colleges or universities, and (3) students whose first sample of college life is PVCC. The latter group, first-time students, is important because it represents the new life continuously flowing into the mainstream of the PVCC student body. It is essential that administrators and faculty understand who these first-timers are, where they come from, and what they expect from the college, because otherwise there is a danger that the flow of first-timers into PVCC will turn into a trickle, sapping institutional strength and vitality.

The purpose of this study is to note demographic and enrollment characteristics of first-time PVCC students during the fall quarter, 1985, as well as to identify any longitudinal trends occurring during the past four years. This is particularly timely in that such data has not been collected during the 1980's. The last report on first-time students, A Profile of the PVCC First-Time Student by Dr. Robert A. Ross (PVCC Office of Institutional Research Report No. 3-79), was published in July, 1979.

Methodology

In so far as statistical treatment is concerned, this report is descriptive in nature. Comparisons are made longitudinally, as well as between student populations (i.e., PVCC first-time and returning students; PVCC and VCCS first-timers; etc.).

Data sources are acknowledged at the bottom of each table in this report. Most of the data was obtained from the Student Enrollment Booklets published electronically each fall by the Virginia Community College System. In order to be consistent, only end-of-quarter figures have been used.

PVCC Fall Quarter First-Time Student Headcount

Six-hundred ninety-six first-time students enrolled at PVCC during the fall quarter 1985, accounting for 18.1% of the student body (see Table 1 and Figure 1). This is the smallest group of first-time students enrolling at the College since fall 1974 and is roughly half the number which enrolled each fall during the maximum growth period of the late 1970's. The percentage of first-time students within the student body as a whole was the lowest in the history of the College.

If other student populations had showed similar declines, PVCC enrollment would have been significantly less than it actually was. However, fall 1985 marked the largest number of both returning and transfer students in college history. Indeed, the number of transfer students more than doubled in two years, and for the first time ever, more transfer students attended PVCC during the fall than first-time

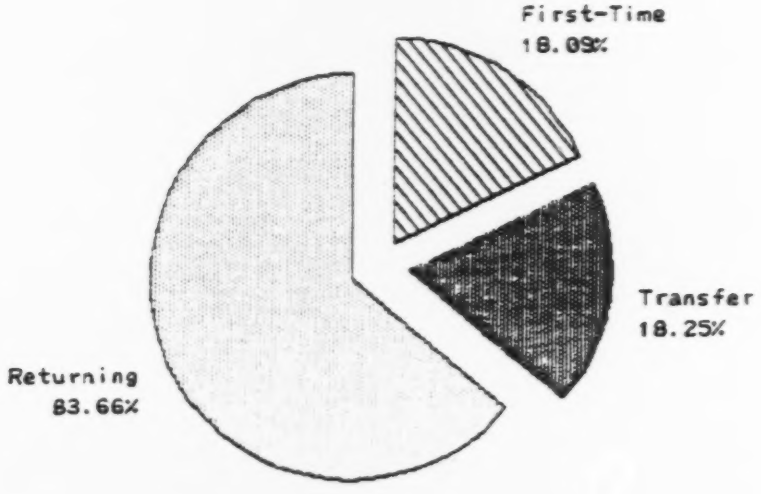
TABLE 1: PVCC FALL QUARTER HEADCOUNT BY TYPE OF STUDENT (1972-1985)

Year	First-Time Students No.	Pct.	Transfer Students No.	Pct.	Returning Students No.	Pct.	TOTAL STUDENTS No.	Increase
1972	270	58.4%	180	39.0%	12	2.6%	462	--
1973	469	42.8%	403	36.8%	224	20.4%	1096	137.2%
1974	504	32.8%	466	30.3%	566	36.8%	1536	40.1%
1975	975	48.4%	88	4.4%	953	47.3%	2016	31.3%
1976	881	43.4%	98	4.8%	1049	51.7%	2028	0.6%
1977	1237	47.3%	74	2.8%	1305	49.9%	2616	29.0%
1978	1488	48.3%	79	2.6%	1513	49.1%	3080	17.7%
1979	1366	42.5%	93	2.9%	1752	54.6%	3211	4.3%
1980	1396	39.4%	92	2.6%	2057	58.0%	3545	10.4%
1981	1144	30.8%	355	9.6%	2215	59.6%	3714	4.8%
1982	912	26.7%	269	7.9%	2236	65.4%	3417	-8.0%
1983	1120	29.7%	291	7.7%	2359	62.6%	3770	10.3%
1984	759	20.7%	547	14.9%	2362	64.4%	3668	-2.7%
1985	696	18.1%	702	18.2%	2449	63.7%	3847	4.9%
Average (1972-85)	944	34.8%	267	9.8%	1504	55.4%	2715	21.5%
Average (1981-85)	926	25.1%	433	11.8%	2324	63.1%	3683	1.9%

SOURCE: VCCS Student Enrollment Booklet, Tables 3B and 4. Note that percentages are by row.

FIGURE 1

PVCC Headcount
By Student Status
Fall 1985

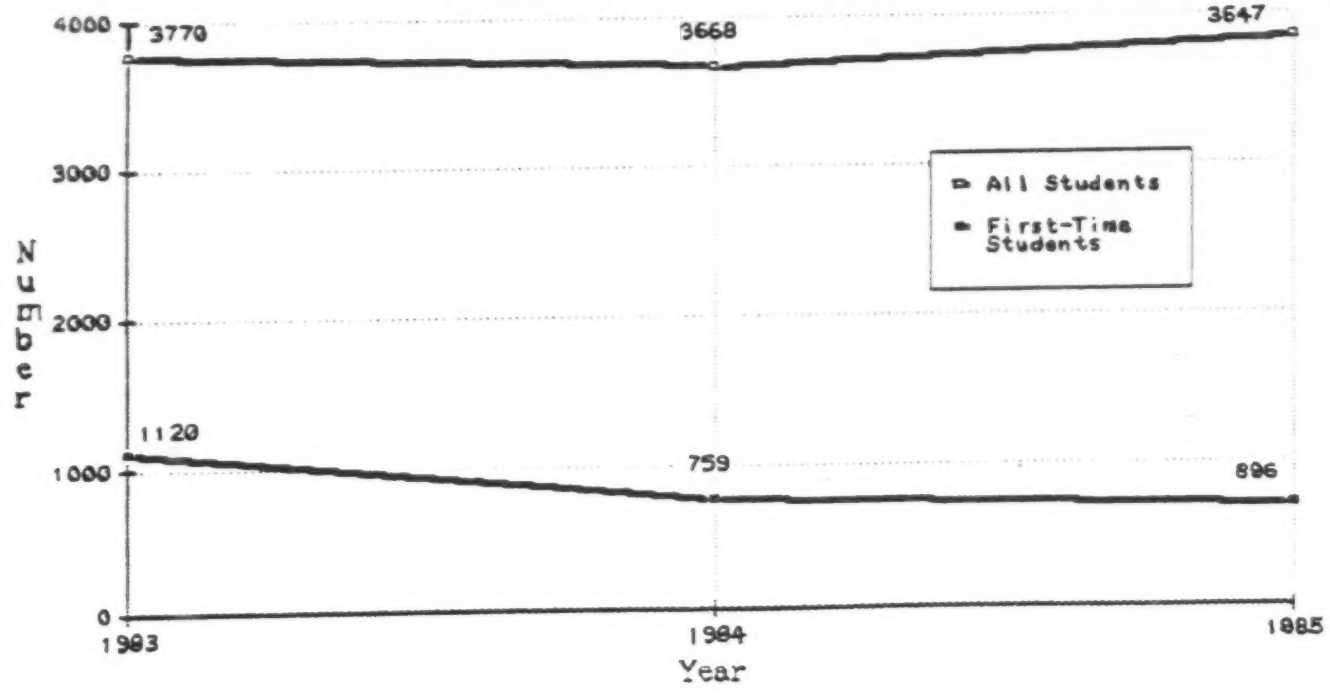


students. This was more than enough to offset the weak showing of the first-timers, and PVCC student headcount reached an all-time high of 3,847, a gain of 4.9% over the previous fall's enrollment.

The overall enrollment picture, however, should not blind one to the sudden and sharp decrease in first-time student enrollment at PVCC. While the overall headcount enrollment has risen two percent during the past two years, first-time student enrollment has dropped 37.9% (see Figure 2). It is evident that, in terms of numbers alone, PVCC is not attracting enough first-time students.

FIGURE 2

PVCC Fall Headcount (1983-85)
All Students/First-Time Students



While the number of first-time applications to PVCC has decreased during the past two years, the proportion of first-time students accepted by and actually enrolling at PVCC has increased. As can be seen in Table 2, the four-year average percentage of first-time students accepted who actually enroll is 74.4%. During the fall quarter of 1985, 95.1% of those first-timers accepted at PVCC enrolled. This is a substantially higher percentage than that of previous years (see Figure 3).

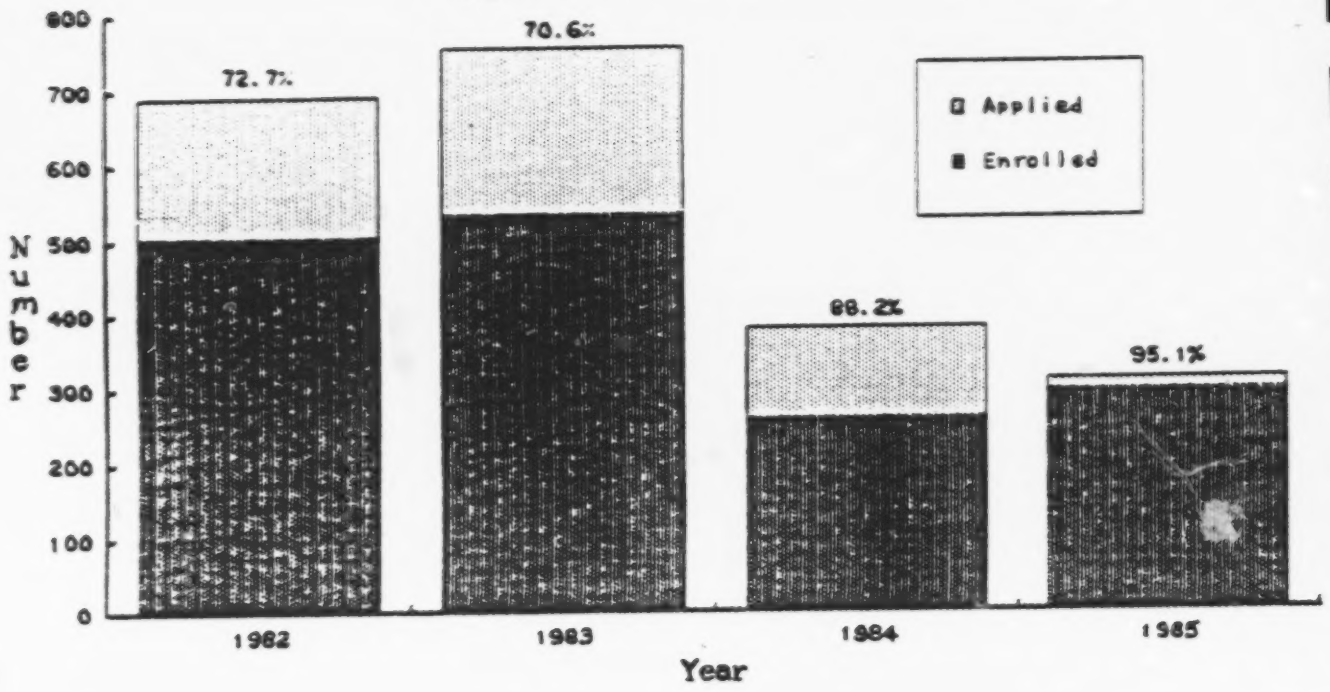
TABLE 2: PVCC FALL QUARTER APPLICATIONS, ACCEPTANCES, AND ENROLLMENTS

	FIRST-TIME STUDENTS						TRANSFER STUDENTS					
	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
YEAR	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1982												
Applied	275	39.7%	418	60.3%	693	100.0%	81	37.3%	136	62.7%	217	100.0%
Accepted	275	100.0%	418	100.0%	693	100.0%	81	100.0%	136	100.0%	217	100.0%
Actually Enrolled	204	74.2%	300	71.8%	504	72.7%	65	80.2%	96	70.6%	161	74.2%
1983												
Applied	297	39.3%	459	60.7%	756	100.0%	70	33.0%	142	67.0%	212	100.0%
Accepted	297	100.0%	459	100.0%	756	100.0%	70	100.0%	142	100.0%	212	100.0%
Actually Enrolled	224	75.4%	310	67.5%	534	70.6%	54	77.1%	71	50.0%	125	59.0%
1984												
Applied	148	38.9%	232	61.1%	380	100.0%	82	37.4%	137	62.6%	219	100.0%
Accepted	148	100.0%	232	100.0%	380	100.0%	82	100.0%	137	100.0%	219	100.0%
Actually Enrolled	112	75.7%	147	63.4%	259	68.2%	45	54.9%	72	52.6%	117	53.4%
1985												
Applied	148	48.1%	160	51.9%	308	100.0%	75	46.6%	86	53.4%	161	100.0%
Accepted	148	100.0%	160	100.0%	308	100.0%	75	100.0%	86	100.0%	161	100.0%
Actually Enrolled	142	95.9%	151	94.4%	293	95.1%	72	96.0%	74	86.0%	146	90.7%
AVERAGE												
Applied	217	40.6%	317	59.4%	534	100.0%	77	38.1%	125	61.9%	202	100.0%
Accepted	217	100.0%	317	100.0%	534	100.0%	77	100.0%	125	100.0%	202	100.0%
Actually Enrolled	171	78.6%	227	71.6%	398	74.4%	59	76.6%	78	62.5%	137	67.9%

SOURCE: OCR 9000B1 Application Report. Note that percentages are by column except for those in the first row in each group of years ("Applied") which are by row. In other words, the first row in each group gives percentages by sex; the remaining two rows give percentage by number of applications. Note, too, that only curricular students are included.

FIGURE 3

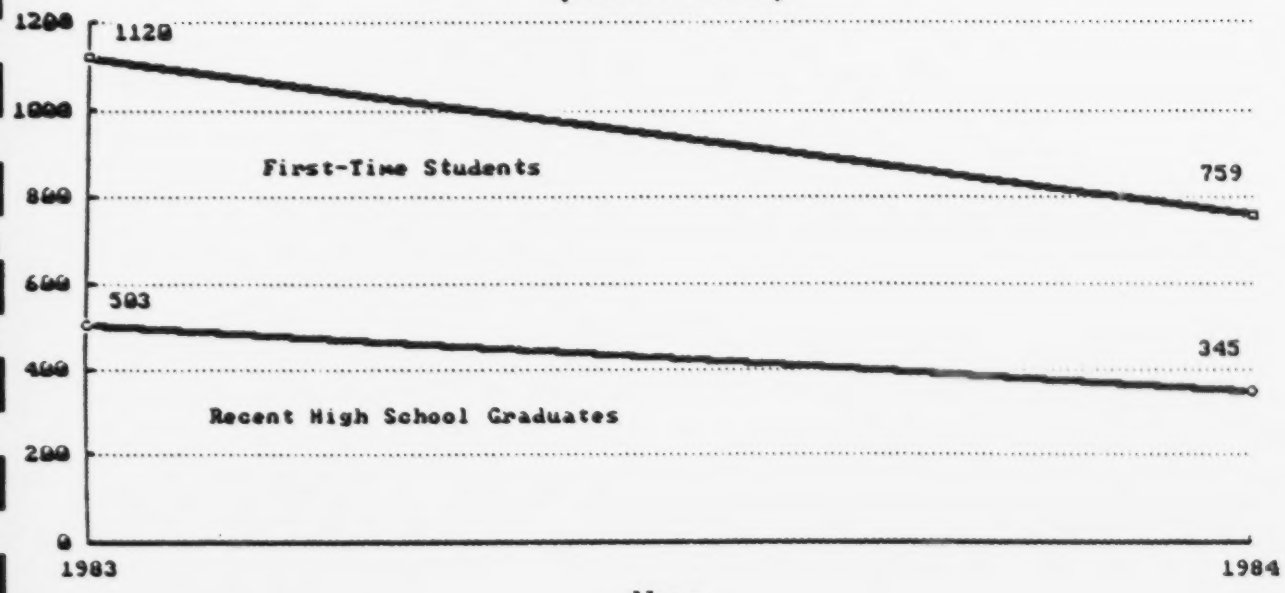
PVCC Fall First-Time Student Applications and Enrollments



The decline of first-time students can, in some measure, be attributed to the fact that fewer students than in the past are enrolling at PVCC immediately after high school graduation. Historically, approximately half of all first-time PVCC students are recent high school graduates, and in this light, it is interesting to note that, between 1983 and 1984, there was a 31.4% decrease in the number of new high school graduates enrolling at PVCC (see PVCC "Market Share" of Selected High Schools--Graduating Class of 1984, PVCC Institutional Research Report No. 5-85, p. 3). This was closely paralleled by a decline in all first-time students during the period of 32.2% (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4

PVCC Fall Quarter Headcount
First-Time Students/
Recent High School Graduates
(1983-1984)



Clearly, PVCC needs to closely monitor its strategies for recruiting recent high school graduates. The pilot program at Charlottesville High School, described in PVCC "Market Share" of Selected High Schools--Graduating Class of 1984 (pp. 4-5), seems to have helped, and a similar program at Albemarle High school, which has just begun, should also help boost first-time student recruitment.

Demographic Characteristics of First-Time Students

As can be seen in Tables 3-4 and Figures 5-7, the typical fall 1985 PVCC first-time student was a white female between the age of 18 and 21 who resided in either the City of Charlottesville or the

TABLE 3: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FALL 1985 PVCC STUDENTS

CATEGORY	First-Time No.	First-Time Pct.	Transfer No.	Transfer Pct.	Returning No.	Returning Pct.	All Students No.	All Students Pct.
SEX								
Male	282	40.5%	275	39.2%	872	35.6%	1429	37.1%
Female	414	59.5%	427	60.8%	1577	64.4%	2418	62.9%
RACE								
White	600	86.2%	637	90.7%	2166	88.4%	3403	88.5%
Black	88	12.6%	50	7.1%	229	9.4%	367	9.5%
Indian	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	0.2%	4	0.1%
Asian	7	1.0%	9	1.3%	31	1.3%	47	1.2%
Hispanic	1	0.1%	4	0.6%	11	0.4%	16	0.4%
Other	0	0.0%	2	0.3%	8	0.3%	10	0.3%
AGE								
Under 18	26	3.7%	1	0.1%	9	0.4%	36	0.9%
18-21	310	44.5%	89	12.7%	448	18.3%	847	22.0%
22-24	47	6.8%	117	16.7%	327	13.4%	491	12.8%
25-34	148	21.3%	251	35.8%	901	36.8%	1300	33.8%
35-44	88	12.6%	157	22.4%	487	19.9%	732	19.0%
45-59	72	10.3%	76	10.8%	250	10.2%	398	10.3%
60 & Over	5	0.7%	11	1.6%	27	1.1%	43	1.1%
TOTAL	696	18.1%	702	18.2%	2449	63.7%	3847	100.0%

SOURCE: VCCS Student Enrollment Booklet, Tables 11B, 14A, 14B, and 15. Note that percentages are by column by group except for the last row, which indicates the percentage of first-time students in the student body as a whole.

TABLE 4: PVCC LOCALITY DISTRIBUTION--FALL 1985

LOCALITY	FIRST-TIME FT	FIRST-TIME PCT.	FIRST-TIME ALL	FIRST-TIME PCT.	TRANSFER FT	TRANSFER ALL	RETURNING FT	RETURNING ALL	TOTAL FT	TOTAL ALL
Albemarle	86	35.2%	244	15.9%	20	254	161	1032	267	1530
Buckingham	7	25.9%	27	29.7%	0	17	9	47	16	91
Charlottesville	45	27.3%	165	15.6%	10	168	114	725	169	1058
Fluvanna	9	18.8%	48	23.6%	1	26	17	129	27	203
Greene	6	13.0%	46	26.3%	1	16	14	113	21	175
Louisa	11	26.8%	41	28.7%	3	12	18	90	32	143
Nelson	7	26.9%	26	19.5%	2	23	13	84	22	133
TOTAL IN-DISTRICT	171	28.6%	597	17.9%	37	516	346	2220	554	3333
Out-of-District	25	28.4%	88	20.3%	13	133	44	212	82	433
Out-of-State	2	18.2%	11	13.6%	15	53	3	17	20	81
GRAND TOTAL	198	28.4%	696	18.1%	65	702	393	2449	656	3847

SOURCE: VCCS S.I.S. database. Note that the percentage figure following full-time, first-time students is the percent of first-time students from each locality who are full-time. The percentage figure following all first-time students is the percent of all students from each locality who are first-time.

FIGURE 5

PVCC First-Time
Students
By Sex
Fall 1985

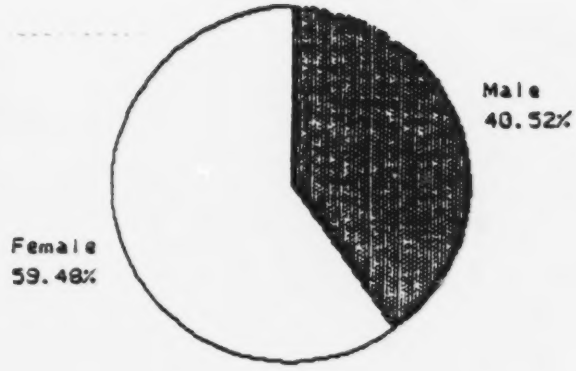


FIGURE 6

PVCC First-Time
Students
By Race
Fall 1985

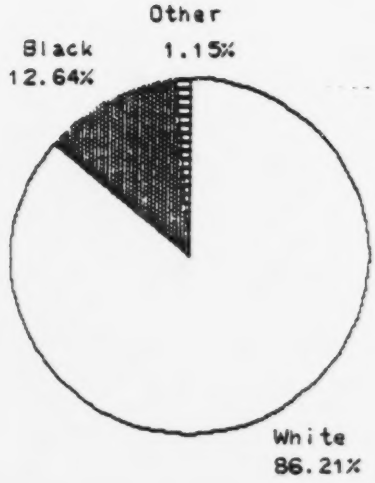
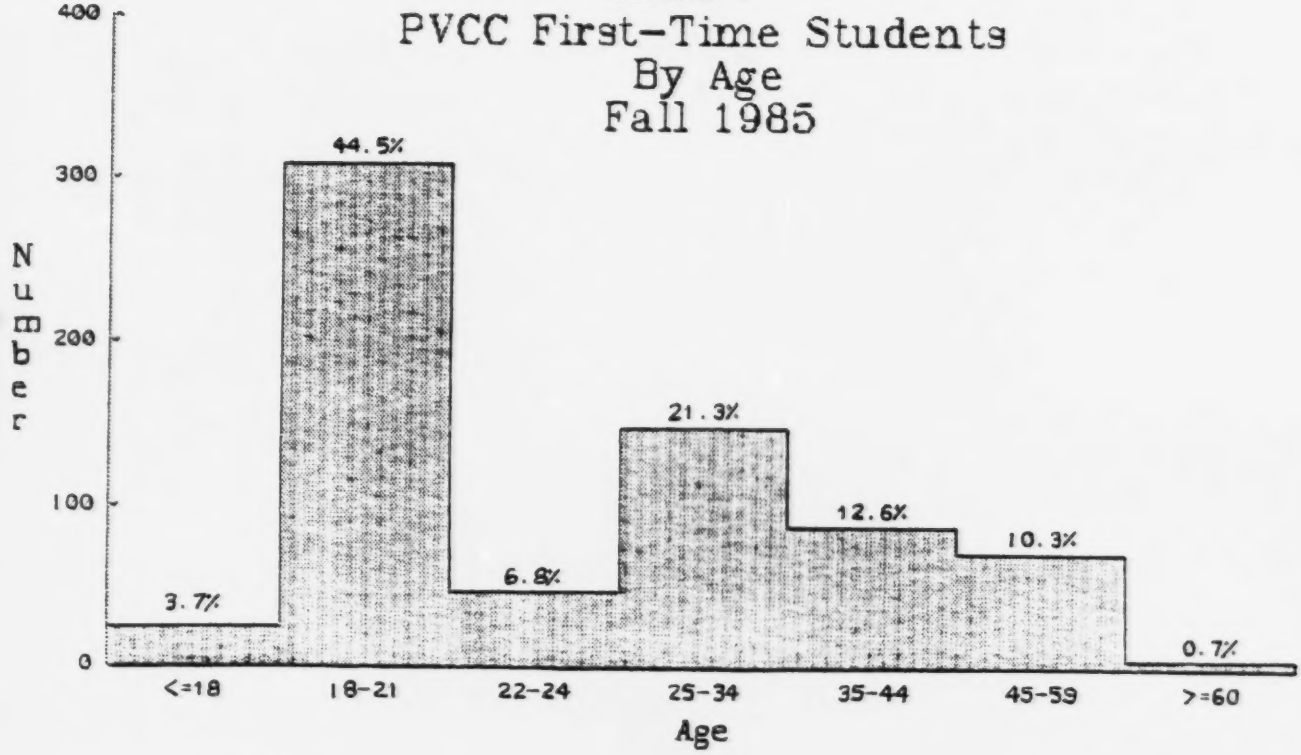


FIGURE 7

PVCC First-Time Students
By Age
Fall 1985



county of Albemarle. First-time students did not differ from transfer or returning students in sex, race, or residence. They differed, however, in age. The median age of all students at PVCC during the fall of 1985 was 28. For transfer and returning students, the median age was 29; for first-time students it was 22. This difference in age can be explained by the fact that nearly half of all first-time students are recent high school graduates.

These demographic characteristics have been fairly stable over time (see Table 5). Since the late 1970's, the ratio of males to females has been 2:3 and the ratio of Whites to minorities has been

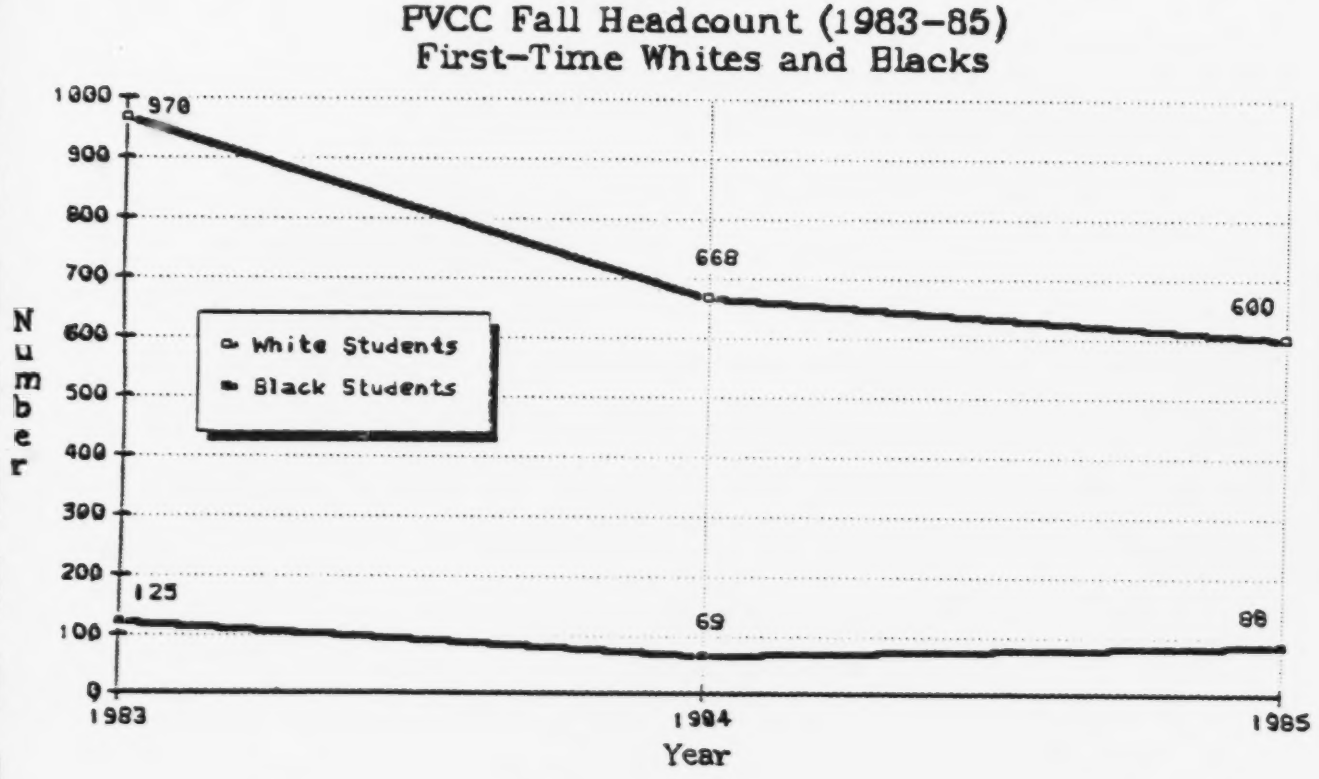
TABLE 5: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PVCC FIRST-TIME STUDENTS (FALL QUARTER)

CATEGORY	1981 No.	1981 Pct.	1982 No.	1982 Pct.	1983 No.	1983 Pct.	1984 No.	1984 Pct.	1985 No.	1985 Pct.	Average No.	Average Pct.
SEX												
Male	448	39.2%	358	39.3%	442	39.5%	306	40.3%	282	40.5%	367	39.6%
Female	696	60.8%	554	60.7%	678	60.5%	453	59.7%	414	59.5%	559	60.4%
RACE												
White	1010	88.3%	814	89.3%	970	86.6%	668	88.0%	600	86.2%	812	87.7%
Black	110	9.6%	79	8.7%	125	11.2%	69	9.1%	88	12.6%	94	10.2%
Indian	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	2	0.2%	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
Asian	12	1.0%	16	1.8%	17	1.5%	12	1.6%	7	1.0%	13	1.4%
Hispanic	7	0.6%	1	0.1%	4	0.4%	6	0.8%	1	0.1%	4	0.4%
Other	5	0.4%	1	0.1%	2	0.2%	3	0.4%	0	0.0%	2	0.2%
AGE												
Under 18	40	3.5%	20	2.2%	31	2.8%	13	1.7%	26	3.7%	26	2.8%
18-21	414	36.2%	358	39.3%	385	34.4%	315	41.5%	310	44.5%	356	38.5%
22-24	123	10.8%	106	11.6%	139	12.4%	76	10.0%	47	6.8%	98	10.6%
25-34	302	26.4%	229	25.1%	323	28.8%	177	23.3%	148	21.3%	236	25.5%
35-44	152	13.3%	133	14.6%	155	13.8%	102	13.4%	88	12.6%	126	13.6%
45-59	109	9.5%	54	5.9%	80	7.1%	70	9.2%	72	10.3%	77	8.3%
60 & Over	4	0.3%	12	1.3%	7	0.6%	6	0.8%	5	0.7%	7	0.7%
TOTAL	1144	30.8%	912	26.7%	1120	29.7%	759	20.7%	696	18.1%	926	25.1%

SOURCE: VCCS Student Enrollment Booklet, Tables 11B, 14A, and 14B. Note that percentages are by column by group except for the last row, which indicates the percentage of first-time students in the student body as a whole.

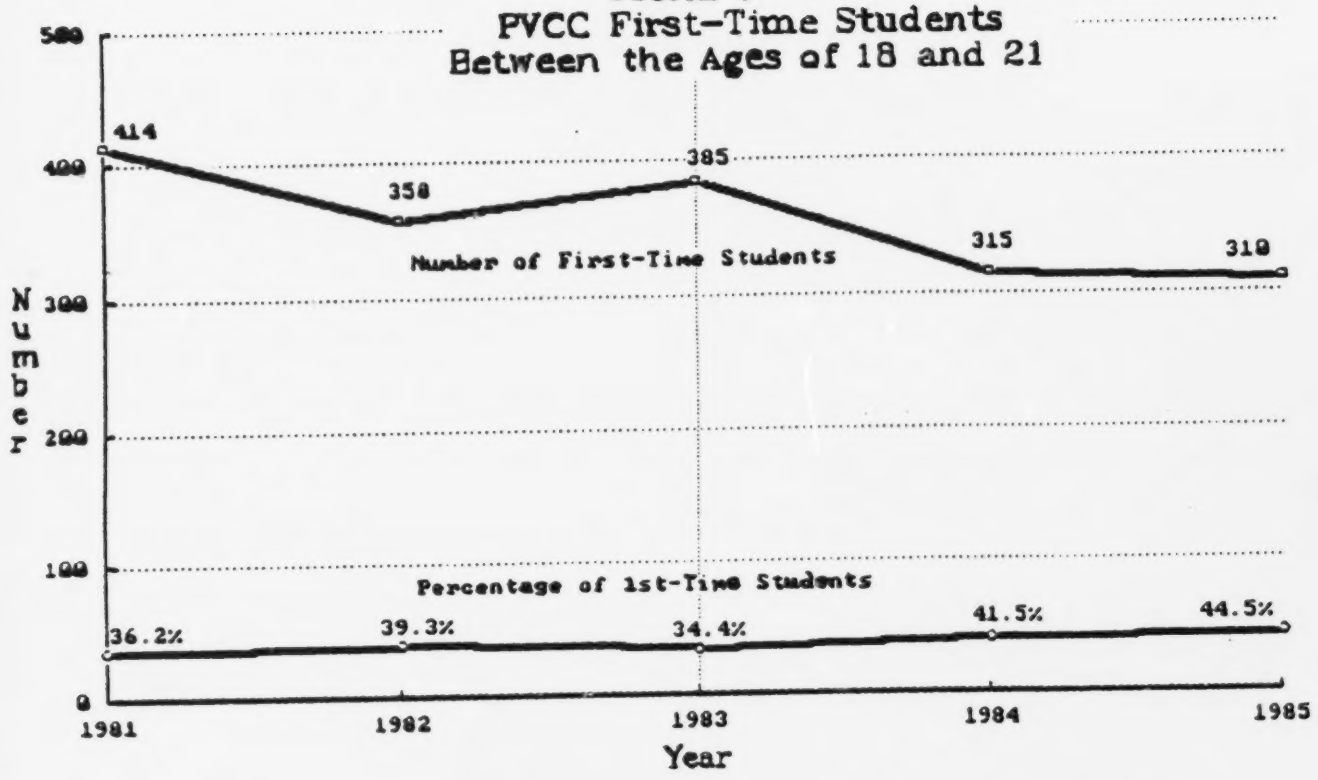
roughly 9:1. The only noticeable difference with respect to race has been the increase this fall in the number of first-time Black students (see Figure 8). This is in keeping with the overall increase in Black students at PVCC. For further information on this topic, see Minority Enrollment Report: Fall Quarter 1985 (Office of Institutional Research Report No. 3-85).

FIGURE 8



Although there was a decrease in the number of first-time students between the ages of 18 and 21, a slight increase occurred in the percentage of first-time 18-21-year olds (see Figure 9). What this means is that not only is PVCC enrolling fewer recent high school graduates, but it is enrolling fewer first-timers in general. In fact, the only age group showing gains in both numbers and percentage between 1984 and 1985 was the 45-59-year old group.

FIGURE 9



Enrollment Characteristics of First-Time Students

The typical fall 1985 PVCC first-time student was a part-time, day student from the state of Virginia who attended classes on campus but was not enrolled in a curricular program (see Figures 10-15). In these respects, he or she was no different than the typical transfer or returning student (see Table 6). There were differences, however, between first-time and transfer and returning students.

The most noticeable difference was that a larger proportion of first-time students attended classes full-time than did transfer or

FIGURE 10

PVCC First-Time
Students
Full-Time/Part-Time
Fall 1985

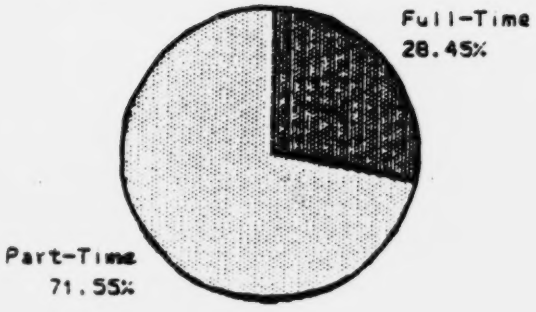


FIGURE 11

PVCC First-Time
Students
Day/Evening Status
Fall 1985

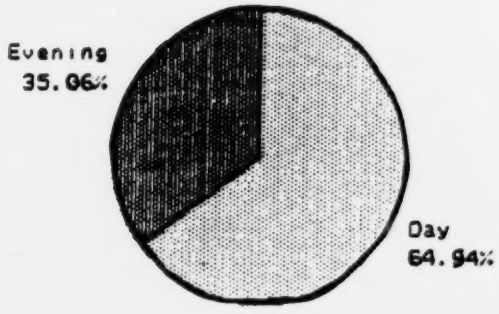


FIGURE 12

PVCC First-Time
Students
By Location
Fall 1985

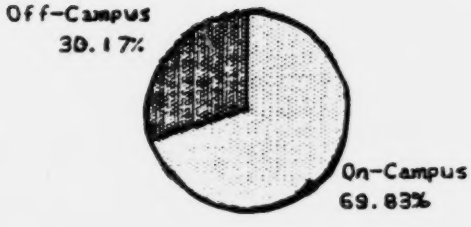


FIGURE 13

PVCC First-Time
Students
By Domicile
Fall 1985

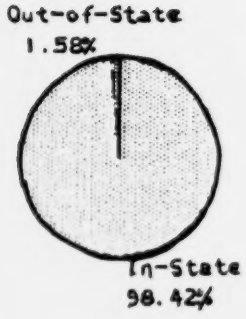


FIGURE 14

PVCC First-Time Students By Program Fall 1985

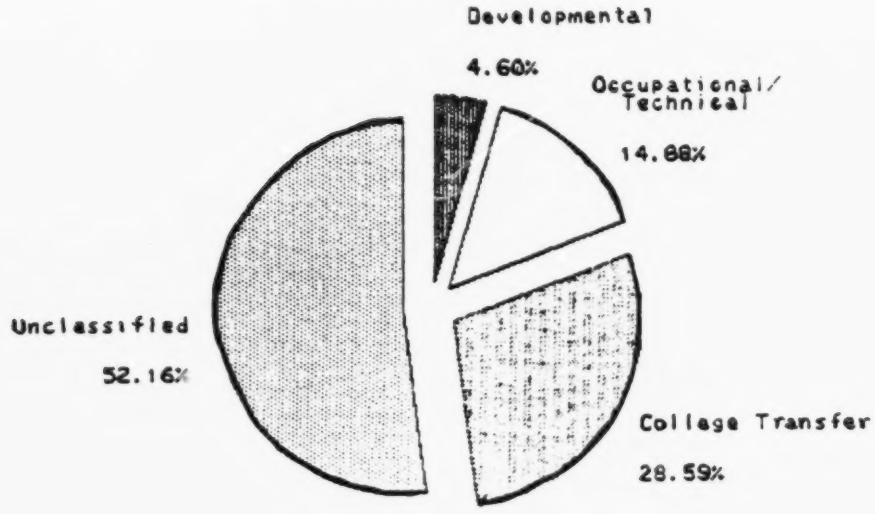


FIGURE 15

PVCC First-Time Students By Degree Sought Fall 1985

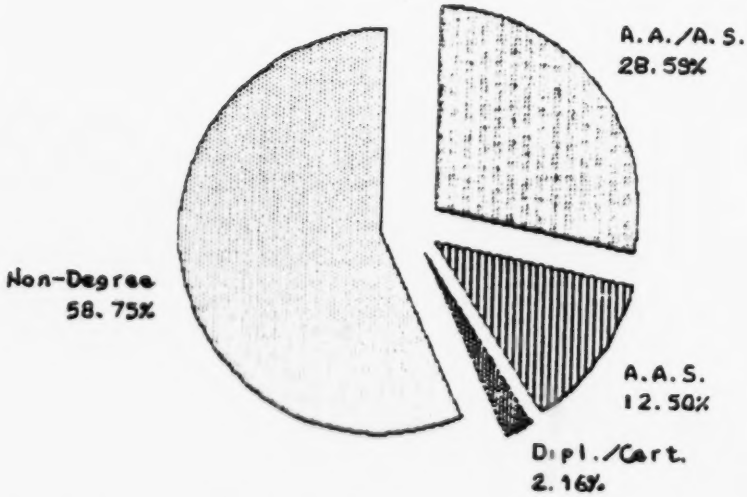


TABLE 6: ENROLLMENT CHARACTERISTICS OF FALL QUARTER 1985 PVCC STUDENTS

CATEGORY	First-Time No.	First-Time Pct.	Transfer No.	Transfer Pct.	Returning No.	Returning Pct.	All Students No.	All Students Pct.
Full-Time	198	28.4%	65	9.3%	393	16.0%	656	17.1%
Part-Time	498	71.6%	637	90.7%	2056	84.0%	3191	82.9%
Day Student	452	64.9%	355	50.6%	1550	63.3%	2357	61.3%
Evening Student	244	35.1%	347	49.4%	899	36.7%	1490	38.7%
On-Campus	486	69.8%	477	67.9%	1912	78.1%	2875	74.7%
Off-Campus	210	30.2%	225	32.1%	537	21.9%	972	25.3%
In-State	685	98.4%	655	93.3%	2426	99.1%	3766	97.9%
Out-of-State	11	1.6%	47	6.7%	23	0.9%	81	2.1%
Developmental	32	4.6%	3	0.4%	101	4.1%	136	3.5%
Occup./Technical	102	14.7%	36	5.1%	594	24.3%	732	19.0%
College Transfer	199	28.6%	112	16.0%	712	29.1%	1023	26.6%
Unclassified	363	52.2%	551	78.5%	1042	42.5%	1956	50.8%
A.A.	46	6.6%	19	2.7%	142	5.8%	207	5.4%
A.S.	153	22.0%	93	13.2%	570	23.3%	816	21.2%
A.A.S.	87	12.5%	30	4.3%	534	21.8%	651	16.9%
Diploma	4	0.6%	1	0.1%	9	0.4%	14	0.4%
Certificate	11	1.6%	5	0.7%	51	2.1%	67	1.7%
Developmental	32	4.6%	3	0.4%	101	4.1%	136	3.5%
Unclassified	363	52.2%	551	78.5%	1042	42.5%	1956	50.8%
TOTAL	696	18.1%	702	18.2%	2449	63.7%	3847	100.0%

SOURCE: VCCS Student Enrollment Booklet, Tables 4, 14A, 14B, and 15. Note that percentages are by column for each group except for the last row, which indicates the percentage of each category in the student body as a whole.

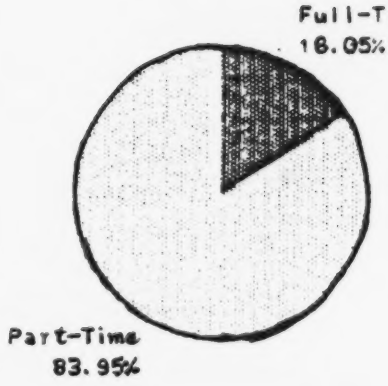
returning students. Over a quarter of all first-time students were classified full-time; less than one-fifth of all returning students, and less than one-tenth of all transfer students, attended PVCC full-time.

The reason for this, again, is that so many first-timers are recent high school graduates. Someone fresh out of high school is more likely to seek an associate degree, and is less likely to have a full-time job or other commitment interfering with college study. A returning or transfer student, on the other hand, is typically seven years older than the first-timer, and those seven years bring with

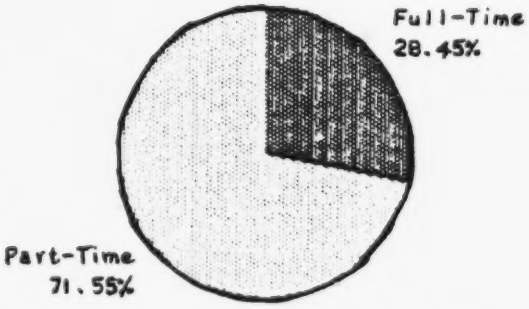
them personal and professional obligations which often preclude full-time study. The full-time/part-time status of first-timers and returning students is depicted graphically in Figure 16.

FIGURE 16

PVCC Returning Students Fall 1985



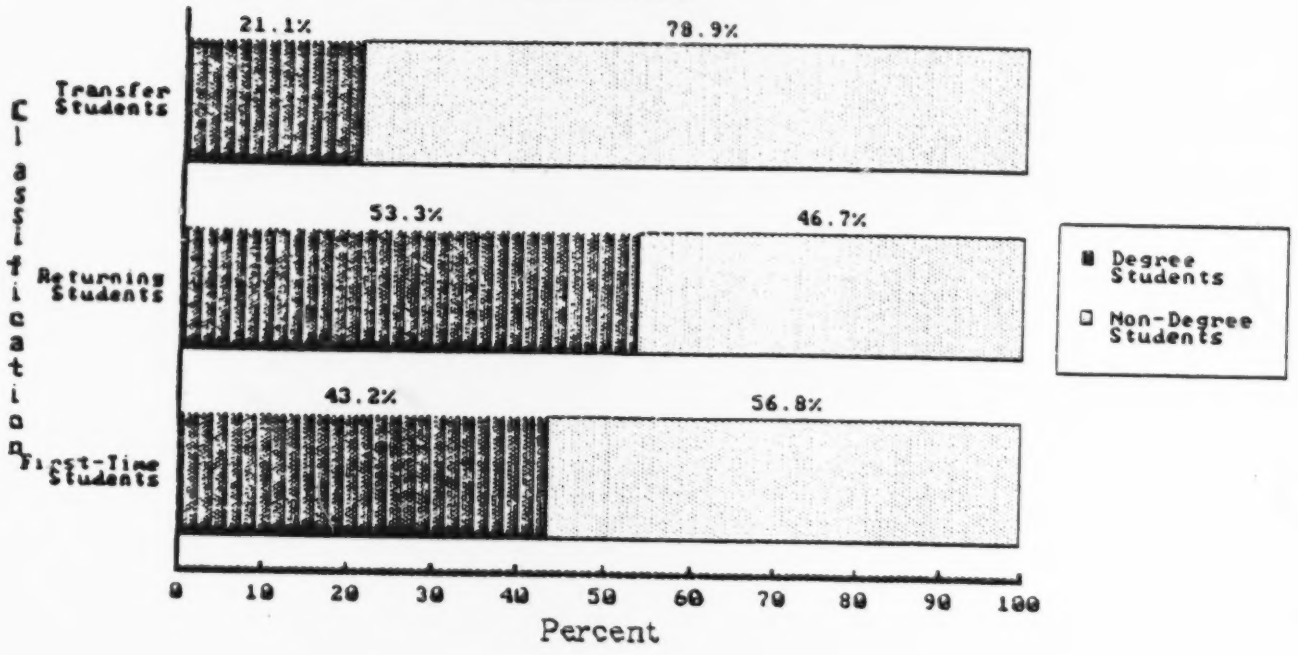
PVCC First-Time Students Fall 1985



Because a larger proportion of first-timers studied full-time at PVCC, one might also assume that a larger proportion were enrolled in curricular programs. This was true with respect to transfers but, surprisingly, a larger percentage of returning students than first-time students were classified as curricular. Over half of all returning students (53.4%) were degree-seeking students, enrolled in either occupational/technical or college transfer programs; only 43.3% of all first-time students were degree-seeking students (see Figure 17).

FIGURE 17

Percentage of Degree-Seeking PVCC Students By Classification Fall 1985



The reason for this is that typically many first-time students wait a quarter or two before definitely deciding in which degree program to enroll. During their first quarter, first-timers often take a full load of courses in order to discover which subject areas appeal to them.

There has been a trend during the 1980's toward fewer curricular, first-time students (see Table 7). In the fall of 1981, 60.3% of all first-timers were actively seeking a degree and enrolled in an occupational/technical or college transfer program; this past fall, only 43.3% were curricular students. It should be noted, however, that both in terms of numbers and percentages, there were more first-time, curricular students in the fall of 1985 than in the fall of 1984. In

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the fall of 1984, 260 students, or 34.3% of all first-timers, were classified as curricular; this past fall, 301 students, or 43.3%, were classified as curricular.

TABLE 7: ENROLLMENT CHARACTERISTICS OF PVCC FIRST-TIME STUDENTS (FALL QUARTER)

CATEGORY	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Average	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Full-Time	300	26.2%	243	26.6%	293	26.2%	198	26.1%	198	28.4%	246	26.6%
Part-Time	844	73.8%	669	73.4%	827	73.8%	561	73.9%	498	71.6%	680	73.4%
Day Student	688	60.1%	570	62.5%	684	61.1%	444	58.5%	452	64.9%	568	61.3%
Evening Student	456	39.9%	342	37.5%	436	38.9%	315	41.5%	244	35.1%	359	38.7%
On-Campus	795	69.5%	678	74.3%	802	71.6%	557	73.4%	486	69.8%	664	71.6%
Off-Campus	349	30.5%	234	25.7%	318	28.4%	202	26.6%	210	30.2%	263	28.4%
In-State	1113	97.3%	883	96.8%	1090	97.3%	734	96.7%	685	98.4%	901	97.3%
Out-of-State	31	2.7%	29	3.2%	30	2.7%	25	3.3%	11	1.6%	25	2.7%
Developmental	57	5.0%	85	9.3%	100	8.9%	80	10.5%	32	4.6%	71	7.6%
Occup./Technical	148	12.9%	114	12.5%	115	10.3%	81	10.7%	102	14.7%	112	12.1%
College Transfer	542	47.4%	403	44.2%	397	35.4%	179	23.6%	199	28.6%	344	37.1%
Unclassified	397	34.7%	310	34.0%	508	45.4%	419	55.2%	363	52.2%	399	43.1%
A.A.	45	3.9%	35	3.8%	52	4.6%	31	4.1%	46	6.6%	42	4.5%
A.S.	497	43.4%	368	40.4%	345	30.8%	148	19.5%	153	22.0%	302	32.6%
A.A.S.	101	8.8%	79	8.7%	89	7.9%	75	9.9%	87	12.5%	86	9.3%
Diploma	20	1.7%	8	0.9%	7	0.6%	2	0.3%	4	0.6%	8	0.9%
Certificate	27	2.4%	27	3.0%	19	1.7%	4	0.5%	11	1.6%	18	1.9%
Developmental	57	5.0%	85	9.3%	100	8.9%	80	10.5%	32	4.6%	71	7.6%
Unclassified	397	34.7%	310	34.0%	508	45.4%	419	55.2%	363	52.2%	399	43.1%
TOTAL	1144	30.8%	912	26.7%	1120	29.7%	759	20.7%	696	18.1%	926	25.1%

SOURCE: VCCS Student Enrollment Booklet, Tables 4, 14A, and 14B. Note that percentages are by column by group except for the last row, which indicates the percentage of first-time students in the student body as a whole.

Another noticeable trend which can be discerned from Table 7 is the decrease in the number of first-time students seeking the Associate of Science degree. In the fall of 1981, 497 students, or 43.4% of all first-timers, sought the A.S. degree; four years later, the figure had dropped to 153 and the percentage figure to 22%.

Looking at Table 8, it can be seen that this decline is largely attributable to a decrease in the number of first-timers enrolling in General Studies. In the fall of 1981, 399 students, or 57.8% of all degree-seeking first-timers, were classified under General Studies; by the fall of 1985, the number had dwindled to 65 students (21.6% of all degree-seeking first-timers). The number of first-time students

TABLE 8: PVCC FIRST-TIME STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY CURRICULUM (FALL QUARTER)

CATEGORY	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985		Average	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	47	6.8%	44	8.5%	43	8.4%	40	15.4%	54	17.9%	46	10.0%
Education	13	1.9%	6	1.2%	5	1.0%	3	1.2%	12	4.0%	8	1.7%
Fine Arts	8	1.2%	4	0.8%	2	0.4%	5	1.9%	2	0.7%	4	0.9%
General Studies	399	57.8%	299	57.8%	262	51.2%	74	28.5%	65	21.6%	220	48.2%
Liberal Arts	37	5.4%	31	6.0%	50	9.8%	26	10.0%	44	14.6%	38	8.2%
Science	38	5.5%	19	3.7%	35	6.8%	31	11.9%	22	7.3%	29	6.4%
AA/AS TOTAL	542	78.6%	403	77.9%	397	77.5%	179	68.8%	199	66.1%	344	75.4%
Accounting	15	2.2%	7	1.4%	9	1.8%	11	4.2%	6	2.0%	10	2.1%
Comm. Soc. Sv.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	--	--	--	--	0	0.0%
Computer Prog.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	23	7.6%	23	5.0%
Data Processing	34	4.9%	33	6.4%	31	6.1%	18	6.9%	1	0.3%	23	5.1%
Electronics	--	--	5	1.0%	8	1.6%	7	2.7%	16	5.3%	9	2.0%
Management	22	3.2%	18	3.5%	18	3.5%	19	7.3%	21	7.0%	20	4.3%
Merchandising	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	0.4%	--	--	1	0.2%
Nursing	3	0.4%	1	0.2%	3	0.6%	1	0.4%	0	0.0%	2	0.4%
Police Science	10	1.4%	6	1.2%	6	1.2%	11	4.2%	10	3.3%	9	1.9%
Resp. Therapy	3	0.4%	2	0.4%	6	1.2%	1	0.4%	1	0.3%	3	0.6%
Sec. Science	14	2.0%	7	1.4%	8	1.6%	6	2.3%	9	3.0%	9	1.9%
AAS TOTAL	101	14.6%	79	15.3%	89	17.4%	75	28.8%	87	28.9%	86	18.9%
Arts/Crafts	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	1	0.4%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
Auto Mech.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	--	--	--	--	0	0.0%
Bus. Ind. Super.	1	0.1%	3	0.6%	2	0.4%	0	0.0%	--	--	2	0.3%
Career Studies	--	--	3	0.6%	6	1.2%	1	0.4%	10	3.3%	5	1.1%
Child Care	6	0.9%	4	0.8%	0	0.0%	2	0.8%	--	--	3	0.7%
Clerical Studies	3	0.4%	4	0.8%	2	0.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.4%
Drafting	8	1.2%	3	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.5%
Draft Design	4	0.6%	2	0.4%	4	0.8%	2	0.8%	4	1.3%	3	0.7%
Elec./Electr.	16	2.3%	6	1.2%	3	0.6%	0	0.0%	--	--	6	1.4%
Electronic Svc.	0	0.0%	2	0.4%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
Health Tech.	7	1.0%	7	1.4%	7	1.4%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	4	1.0%
Indust. Mgt.	0	0.0%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.1%
DIP/CERT TOTAL	47	6.8%	35	6.8%	26	5.1%	6	2.3%	15	5.0%	26	5.7%
TOTAL	690	18.6%	517	15.1%	512	13.6%	260	7.1%	301	7.8%	456	12.4%

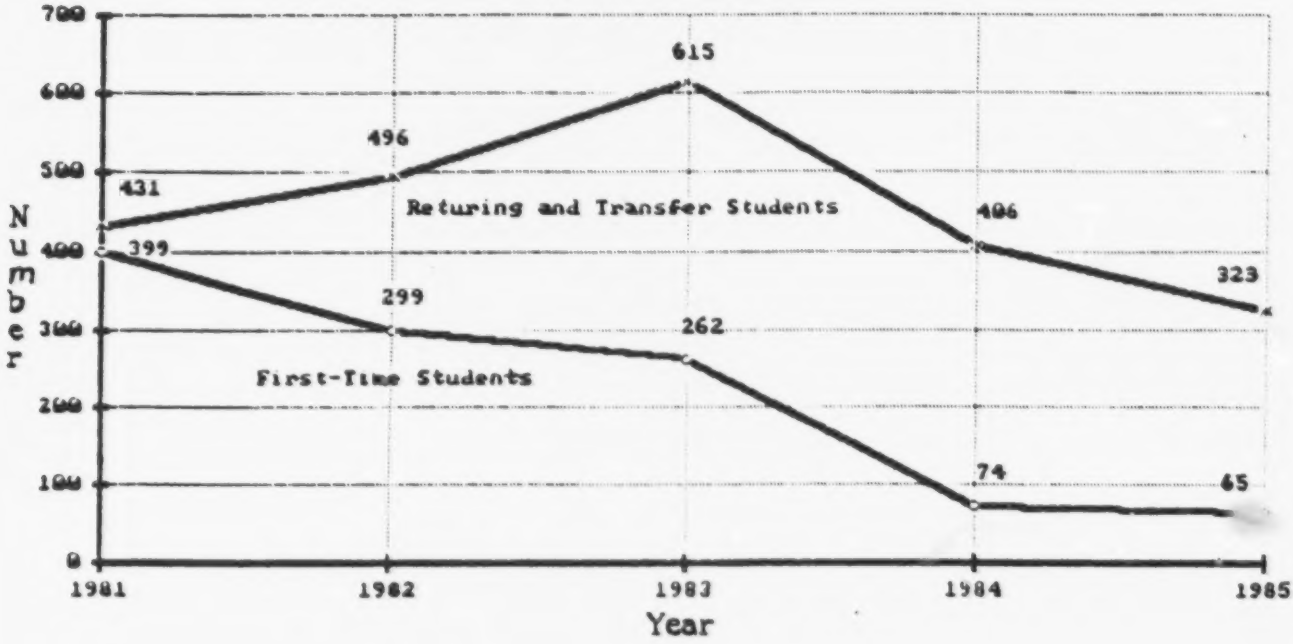
SOURCE: VCCS Student Enrollment Booklet, Table 6C. NOTE: Percentages are by column except for the last row, which shows the percentage of 1st-time, degree-seeking students.

enrolled in Business Administration, Education, and Science (the other curricula under the A.S. degree) has been relatively stable during this four-year period.

The decline in General Studies has been greater for first-timers than for students in general (see Figure 18). Between fall 1981 and fall 1985, there was an 83.7% decrease in first-time, General Studies students. During the same period, there was a 25% decrease for other General Studies students (returnees and transfers). Clearly, General Studies has lost its attractiveness to many first-timers, and those involved in both curriculum planning and recruiting should be aware of this.

FIGURE 18

PVCC Fall Quarter Students
Enrolled in General Studies
By Classification



Although the number of first-timers seeking the Associate of Applied Science degree has been relatively stable during the past four years, the percentage of first-time, A.A.S. students has risen. Between fall 1981 and fall 1983, the percentage of all first-timers seeking the A.A.S. degree rose slightly from 14.6% to 17.4%; between fall 1983 and fall 1984, it jumped dramatically to 28.8%; by fall 1985 the percentage figure was stable at 28.9%.

The opposite has been true with respect to first-time, diploma and certificate students. Although the proportion of first-timers seeking either certificates or diplomas has been stable, varying between a low of 2.3% in fall 1984 to a high of 6.8% in the fall of both 1981 and 1982, the numbers have not. Between 1981 and 1983 there was a steady decline in numbers, from 47 to 26. A sharp drop occurred between 1983 and 1984 when only six first-timers were classified as either certificate or diploma students. The picture was somewhat brighter this fall, as fifteen first-timers enrolled.

It would seem, from the above, that the same type of students who have always enrolled in A.A.S. programs are still doing so. Their percentage has grown only because the number of first-time students in general has shrunk. There has, however, been less interest from first-timers in diploma and certificate programs. The percentage has remained stable only because of the decrease in all first-time students.

PVCC and VCCS First-Time Students

Table 9 presents a comparison between PVCC and VCCS first-time, fall 1985 students by selected demographic and enrollment characterisitcs. As can be seen, first-time students throughout the Virginia Community College System were essentially alike in sex, race, age, full-time/part-time status, day/evening status, and state residence.

TABLE 9: A COMPARISON OF PVCC FIRST-TIME STUDENTS AND OTHER VCCS FIRST-TIME STUDENTS BY SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC AND ENROLLMENT CHARACTERISTICS (FALL 1985)

CATEGORY	PVCC	VCCS
Male	40.5%	44.9%
Female	59.5%	55.1%
White	86.2%	82.4%
Black	12.6%	12.2%
Indian	0.0%	0.3%
Asian	1.0%	2.9%
Hispanic	0.1%	1.5%
Other	0.0%	0.7%
Under 18	3.7%	4.7%
18-21	44.5%	38.9%
22-24	6.8%	10.1%
25-34	21.3%	23.0%
35-44	12.6%	14.2%
45-59	10.3%	7.9%
60 & Over	0.7%	1.3%
Full-Time	28.4%	28.7%
Part-Time	71.6%	71.3%
Day Student	64.9%	66.1%
Evening Student	35.1%	33.9%
On-Campus	69.8%	87.4%
Off-Campus	30.2%	12.6%

CATEGORY	PVCC	VCCS
In-State	98.4%	92.8%
Out-of-State	1.6%	7.2%
Developmental	4.6%	2.4%
Occup./Technical	14.7%	30.6%
Bachelors Credit	28.6%	18.5%
Unclassified	52.2%	48.5%
A.A.	6.6%	6.3%
A.S.	22.0%	12.2%
A.A.S.	12.5%	21.2%
Diploma	0.6%	0.5%
Certificate	1.6%	8.8%
Developmental	4.6%	2.4%
Unclassified	52.2%	48.5%
No Major	56.8%	50.9%
Health	0.3%	0.8%
Business	17.8%	21.7%
Agriculture	--	0.3%
Public Service	1.4%	2.8%
Fine Arts	0.3%	1.5%
Liberal Arts/Educ	17.4%	10.3%
Science	3.2%	3.4%
Engr/Industr	2.9%	8.4%

SOURCE: VCCS Student Enrollment Booklet, Tables 4, 5, 11B, 14A, and 14B. Note that the two categories, PVCC and VCCS, are exclusive--PVCC data have been removed from VCCS data.

More PVCC first-time students studied off-campus than did VCCS first-time students. This was undoubtedly due to the efforts and work of Piedmont's Division of Extended Learning Opportunities.

Classes were offered throughout the PVCC service region, and people took advantage of the opportunity to earn college credit at work settings or close to home.

A larger percentage of VCCS first-timers enrolled in occupational /technical programs, and a larger percentage of PVCC first-timers enrolled in college transfer programs. This should come as no surprise, because Piedmont has always excelled in the college transfer fucntion, its graduates typically doing quite well at four-year colleges and universities (see The Academic Performance of Piedmont Virginia Community College Transfer Students at the University of Virginia by Frank J. Doherty [Institutional Research Report No. 5-84, July 1984]).

With respect to degrees sought, approximately the same proportion of PVCC and VCCS first-timers were enrolled in A.A. and diploma programs. More VCCS first-timers worked toward certificates (8.8% as opposed to 1.6% for PVCC), and slightly more PVCC first-time students were unclassified (52.2% as opposed to 48.5% for the VCCS). The percentages of first-time students seeking A.S. and A.A.S. degrees were reversed for PVCC and the VCCS. Twenty-two percent of Piedmont's first-timers sought the A.S. and 12.5% the A.A.S.; 12.2% of the VCCS first-timers sought the A.S. and 21.2% the A.A.S. This makes sense when one considers that Piedmont had more first-timers in the college transfer program, and the VCCS more in occupational/technical programs.

In so far as major curricular areas were concerned, the VCCS enrolled slightly more first-timers in business and engineering, and

Piedmont enrolled more in Liberal Arts and Education. Because Piedmont had a larger proportion of unclassified and developmental first-time students, a smaller percentage had declared majors.

Conclusions

The major findings of this study include the following:

- The fall 1985 PVCC first-time student headcount was the lowest since 1974.
- First-time student headcount at PVCC has dropped 37.9% during the past two years.
- The percentage of first-time students within the study body as a whole was the lowest in the history of the college.
- Fewer recent high school graduates are enrolling at Piedmont.
- There as been a trend during the past four years in the PVCC student body toward fewer curricular, first-time students. Fall 1985 saw a slight reversal of this trend.
- A larger proprotion of first-time students than transfer or returning students are unclassified.
- Fewer first-time students are seeking the A.S. degree. However, a larger proportion of PVCC first-timers seek the A.S. degree than do VCCS first-timers.
- There as been a steady drop in the number and proportion of first-time students majoring in General Studies.
- First-time students are younger than returning or transfer students, and a larger percentage attend classes full-time.
- The percentage of first-time students accepted by the college who actually enroll has dramatically increased.

Clearly, given the dramatic decrease in numbers and percentage, recruiting first-time students at PVCC should be closely monitored. Because so many first-timers are recent high school graduates, outreach efforts at area high schools are of key importance. It will be interesting to see if the current programs at Charlottesville and Albemarle high schools bear fruit in the form of increased numbers of first-time students attending Piedmont. Effort must also be spent with first-timers once they enroll at PVCC. Perhaps such effort will result in more students enrolling in General Studies and other curricular programs. Certainly, it should help Piedmont provide a quality education for all students.

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